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C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 001366

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: GDRC SLOWLY PREPARING FOR GREAT LAKES CONFERENCE

REF: KINSHASA 414

Classified By: Poloff Gons Nachman for Reasons 1.5 B and D

**¶11.** (C) Summary. The DRC's National Preparatory Committee for the Great Lakes Region Conference (on security, economic integration and social issues) met for the first time on July 5th to develop a national agenda. Baudoin Hamuli, National Coordinator, acknowledged that GDRC preparations are behind schedule and that the President's Office remains divided about the Congo's participation due to suspicions over Rwanda's intentions. End Summary.

DRC National Committee Behind Schedule on Preparations

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**¶12.** (U) The first summit of the International Conference for the Great Lakes Region (IC/GLR) is scheduled to take place in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in November 2004. This regional meeting is being coordinated by the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General (SRSG) for the Great Lakes region, Ibrahim Fall, and it is expected to address security, regional economic integration, and various social issues of relevance to the region (reftel).

**¶13.** (U) Poloff met with Baudouin Hamuli, DRC National Coordinator for the IC/GLR July 15. Hamuli said that DRC national commission for this conference had finally been created and included 97 members representing various ministries, the office of the presidency, and all four vice-presidents. This committee met for the first time the week of July 5th.

**¶14.** (SBU) Hamuli acknowledged that the DRC's preparations for the conference were behind schedule, but indicated that commission members would strive to do their best to prepare the DRC's agenda. Their goal is to have the first draft of the national agenda in two months and the final draft in three. Only a core group of 10 committee members is expected to travel to the November summit.

GDRC Remains Ambivalent About Great Lakes Conference

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**¶15.** (SBU) Hamuli said that his office was working well with the Ministry of Regional Cooperation and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in preparing for the conference. Various other ministries like Social Affairs and Human Rights are also actively supporting DRC participation in this event.

**¶16.** (C) According to Hamuli, Presidential Advisor Andre Kapanga is now also supportive of DRC participation in the IC/GLR. However, he noted that Presidential Advisor for Security, Samba Kaputo, remained skeptical of this regional conference due to suspicion that Rwanda would try to manipulate events to the DRC's detriment. In Hamuli's view, this division within the President's office accounts for the ambivalent GDRC attitude towards the conference and it also calls into question the President's attendance at the November summit.

Comment

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**¶17.** (C) GDRC preparations for the IC/GLR are proceeding slowly and inefficiently. The newly formed national preparatory commission consisting of 97 participants will be hard to coordinate and will make it difficult for the GDRC to formulate a realistic and focused agenda. Moreover, the continued ambivalence within the Presidency to DRC participation in the conference hampers preparation efforts and calls into question the DRC's participation.

SCOTT